

II. Changes in the Region

A. WITHIN THE REGIONAL COUNCIL

Mission, Structure and Programs

Mission. The Council performs, as dictated by legislature, as a local, multi-jurisdictional agency focused specifically on regional planning and economic development. The Council selects and employs an Executive Director. The Executive Director then selects and employs the staff to operate as low-key facilitators in a process that converts community and economic development needs into plans and strategies. These plans are then converted into the development of projects and programs. The Council's role is also to prioritize local goals and objectives, review and endorse projects, and to aid in pursuit of funding. Once funding is secured, the staff also provides project administration services on a contractual basis to member governments, public service districts, and other community organizations as needed.

Structure (see attached membership/staff list). The Council consists of the County Commission Presidents from each of the seven (7) Counties of the Region as well as the Mayors from its twenty-four (24) Municipalities. In addition, twenty-three (23) private sector or citizen representatives are selected by this Region's respective County Commissioners for an annual term. The private sector membership affords the Council's wide range of diverse opinions, experiences, and expertise to compliment the elected official's views. The background of the private sector members, by design, runs the gamut reflective of the region's particular identity. There are representatives from, but not limited to; business/industry upper management decision makers, workforce program administrators, post secondary education administrators, chamber of commerce executive directors.

Currently, there are four (4) full-time positions, which include; Executive Director, Regional Development Director, Community Development Specialist, and an Administrative Assistant. A part time Project Manager, who is a registered Professional Engineer (PE), has been added to the staff. The Executive Director continues to hold regular staff meetings for open discussion and information sharing of all project concerns, prioritization and agency operations. Consulting staff includes accounting services, information & technology services and legal counsel.

Programs. The operation budget continues to consist of federal and state funds, local assessment dues, and contractual project administration. Project administration, which contributes 65% of the Region VII operating budget, is necessary to maintain an adequate level of staff to perform the requested services needed by the member governments and/or their local organizations.

Staff continues to utilize the Project Development Policy Process (attached). This Council-approved process establishes a procedure to take a project from its initial discussion to completion and identifies appropriate staff involvement. This process is distributed to member governments, public service districts, development authorities, and engineering firms. This process is an effort to keep communication open and ongoing with all parties involved in the project.

The staff completed multiple applications this past year for various community development initiatives and water/wastewater needs. The staff has managed to fulfill all reasonable requests for technical assistance. The project list now has 125 projects identified. Additional requests for assistance are ongoing. For the past 12 years the staff has presented a schedule to Council members outlining the project application procedure in order to meet annual funding application deadlines in a timely and effective manner.

For FY2011, this region was blessed to have approximately 21 funding commitments for various projects, which included the following

Program/Agency	#
Small Cities Block Grants	2
U.S. Economic Development Administration Grant (EDA)	1
Appalachian Regional Commission Grant (ARC)	1
ARC Flex-E-Grant	1
WV Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council Grant/Loans	3
USDA Loan/ Grant	2
DEP SRF Loans	1
WV Courthouse Facilities Grant	1
WV Courthouse Records Grant	1
Court Security Grant	1
Community Participation Grants Program	4
WV Coal Waste Severance Grant	1
Transportation Enhancement Project	1
DWTRF Loans	1

In the past year, the following applications have been prepared and submitted in this Region:

Program/Agency	#
Small Cities Block Grants	7
U.S. Economic Development Administration Grant (EDA)	1
Appalachian Regional Commission Grant (ARC)	1
ARC Flex-E-Grant	2
WV Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council Grant/Loans	5
USDA Loan/Grant	1
DEP SRF Loans	1
WV Courthouse Facilities Grant	1
WV Courthouse Records Grant	1
Court Security Grant	1
Community Participation Grants Program	4
DWTRF Loans	2
Assistance to Firefighters Grant applications	4
Federal Tiger III Transportation	1
Transportation Enhancement/Recreational Trails/Safe Routes to Schools (TE, RT, S2S)	2

The staff continues to work on EDA projects, which are ranked according to EDA's Investment Criteria. The project that complies with EDA's investment criteria is selected by staff and/or Council as the number one EDA project for this Region.

This Council continues to realize more and more each year that they have the strength and are more effective when they "join hands" to think regionally and to support a particular issue as a whole body. The commitment from staff and council to support the efforts of engaging our youth from the region continues to be one of Region VII PDC's main goals. Region VII continues to look for opportunities to include young people in the Planning & Development process.

Members of the Council have stood ready to support local and national concerns by vote or meeting participation. The Council remains committed to their resolution to support the Regional Councils as originally created.

Since 1999, the Council has participated and invited other local citizens to participate in the development of the CEDS. This year's process has used the information and enthusiasm generated from previous forums, projects, and/or meetings to improve development strategies of the seven county area in east central West Virginia. A more focused and more evolved vision of a regional future has resulted. The CEDS Committee meetings and survey instrument evaluations have helped to identify & describe concerns, needs, opportunities, assets, and the Council/Staff's effectiveness for this Region.



Public CEDS Outreach in Braxton County, West Virginia

REGION VII PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
2009 MEMBERSHIP

BARBOUR COUNTY COMMISSION PRESIDENT

The Honorable Timothy McDaniel
Barbour County Commission
8 North Main Street
Philippi, WV 26416

Or

BARBOUR COUNTY COMMISSION (REPRESENTATIVE)

The Honorable Philip Hart
Barbour County Commission
Rt. 1, Box 48G
Philippi, WV 26416

CITY OF BELINGTON

The Honorable Carlton
"Jodie " Haller
Mayor of Belington
P.O. Box 926
Belington, WV 26250

CITY OF PHILIPPI

The Honorable David Mulneix
Mayor of Philippi
City Hall
PO Box 460
Philippi, WV 26416

City of Belington

(Representative)
Mr. Max Grove
522 River Road
Belington, WV 26250

City of Philippi

(Representative)
Mr. Ed Larry
202 Ann Street
Philippi, WV 26416

TOWN OF JUNIOR

The Honorable Garry Miller
Mayor of Junior
Town Hall
P O Box 247
Junior, WV 26275

PRIVATE SECTOR

Mr. Charles Foley
8 North Main Street
Philippi, WV 26416

Mr. Mike Hudnall
Freedom Bank
315 Crim Avenue
Belington, WV 26250

Dr. Richard Creehan, Pres.
Alderson-Broadus College
PO Box 2035
Philippi, WV 26416

REGION VII PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
2009 MEMBERSHIP

BRAXTON COUNTY COMMISSION

The Honorable David Jack
President, Braxton County Commission
PO Box 486
Sutton, WV 26601

Representative
Teresa Frame
Braxton County Commission
PO Box 486
Sutton, WV 26601

TOWN OF BURNSVILLE

The Honorable Paul Bragg
Mayor of Burnsville
Town Hall
PO Box 305
Burnsville, WV 26335

TOWN OF GASSAWAY

The Honorable Richard Roach
Mayor of Gassaway
712 Braxton Street
Gassaway, WV 26624

TOWN OF FLATWOODS

The Honorable Carolyn Sue Marple
Mayor of Flatwoods
PO Box 52
Flatwoods, WV 26621

TOWN OF SUTTON

The Honorable J.L. Campbell
Mayor of Sutton
P.O. Box 366
Sutton, WV 26601

PRIVATE SECTOR

Ms. Evelyn Post
PO Box 186
Buckhannon, WV 26201

Ms. Dorothy Gioulis
612 Main Street
Sutton, WV 26601

Mrs. Pamela Myers
875 Airport Rd
Sutton, WV 26601

REGION VII PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
2009 MEMBERSHIP

GILMER COUNTY COMMISSION

The Honorable David Hess
President, Gilmer County Commission
10 Howard Street
Glennville, WV 26351

Mr. Darrell Ramsey, Representative to Council
4568 U.S. Highway 33 East
Glennville, WV 26351

CITY OF GLENVILLE

The Honorable Tashua Allman
Mayor of Glennville
City Hall
20 North Court Street
Glennville, WV 26351

TOWN OF SAND FORK

The Honorable Franklin Tomblin
Mayor of Sand Fork
Town Hall
P O Box 173
Sand Fork, WV 26430

PRIVATE SECTOR

Mr. Robert O. Hardman II
Glennville State College
200 High Street
Glennville, WV 26351

Ms. Shelly DeMarino
c/o Waco Oil & Gas
PO Box 397
Glennville, WV 26351

LEWIS COUNTY COMMISSION (REPRESENTATIVE)

The Honorable Agnes Queen
Lewis County Commission
P O Box 466
Weston, WV 26452-7013

TOWN OF JANE LEW

The Honorable Sam West
Mayor of Jane Lew
PO Box 50
Jane Lew, WV 26378

Jane Lew

Representative
Tom Fox
Jane Lew, WV 26378

CITY OF WESTON

The Honorable Julia Spelsburg
Mayor of Weston
City Hall
102 2nd Street
Weston, WV 26452

PRIVATE SECTOR

Mr. Richard Bonnett
594 Sunshine Road
Weston, WV 26452

Ms. Penny Bullock
2 Heath Court
Weston, WV 26452

Mr. Greg Cunningham
POB 1248
Jane Lew, WV 26387

REGION VII PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
2009 MEMBERSHIP

RANDOLPH COUNTY COMMISSION (REPRESENTATIVE)

The Honorable Mike Taylor
President, Randolph County Commission
4 Randolph Avenue, Suite 102
Elkins, WV 26241

TOWN OF BEVERLY

The Honorable David Harper
Mayor of Beverly
Town Hall
P.O. Box 279
Beverly, WV 26253

TOWN OF COALTON

The Honorable Jim Rossi
Mayor of Coalton
POB 279
Coalton, WV 26257

HUTTONSVILLE CORP.

The Honorable Rodney McAtee
Mayor of Huttonsville
Town Hall
PO Box 81
Huttonsville, WV 26273-0081

TOWN OF MILL CREEK

The Honorable Bill Brock
Mayor of Mill Creek
Town Hall
PO Box 128
Mill Creek, WV 26280

CITY OF ELKINS

The Honorable Duke Talbott
Mayor of Elkins
City Hall
401 Davis Avenue
Elkins, WV 26241

TOWN OF MONTROSE

The Honorable Joseph Bennett
Mayor of Montrose
Town Hall
PO Box 84
Montrose, WV 26283

TOWN OF HARMAN

The Honorable Jerry Teter
Mayor of Harman
PO Box 125
Harman, WV 26270

PRIVATE SECTOR

Mr. Larry Gross, Mgr.
Colonial Mill Works
316 Buffalo Street
Elkins, WV 26241

Mr. Mike Ross
PO Box 219
Coalton, WV 26257

Kate Reed
Executive Director
Randolph Co.
Chamber of Commerce
200 Elkins Plaza
Elkins, WV 26241

Mr. G.T. "Buck" Smith, President
D&E College
100 Campus Dr.
Elkins, WV 26241

Mr. Mark Doak, Pres.
Davis Health Systems
PO Box 1484
Elkins, WV 26241

REGION VII PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
2009 MEMBERSHIP

TUCKER COUNTY COMMISSION
(REPRESENTATIVE)

The Honorable Thomas Carr
Tucker County Commission
215 First Street
Parsons, WV 26287

TOWN OF DAVIS

The Honorable Joe Drenning
Mayor of Davis
Town Hall
PO Box 207
Davis, WV 26260

CITY OF THOMAS

The Honorable Matt Quattro
Mayor of Thomas
City Hall
PO Box 248
Thomas, WV 26292

TOWN OF HENDRICKS

The Honorable Solena Roberts
Mayor of Hendricks
Town Hall
Main Street
Hendricks, WV 26271

CITY OF PARSONS

The Honorable Dorothy Judy
Mayor of Parsons
City Hall
341 Second Street
Parsons, WV 26287

TOWN OF HAMBLETON

The Honorable Linda Bates
Mayor of Hambleton
PO Box 153
Hambleton, WV 26269

PRIVATE SECTOR

Chris Stadelman
The Parsons Advocate
POB 345
Parsons, WV 26287

Ms. Sarah Minear
2020 Georgian Lane
Morgantown, WV 26508

REGION VII PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
2009 MEMBERSHIP

UPSHUR COUNTY COMMISSION

The Honorable Donnie R. Tenney
President, Upshur County Commission
38 West Main Street
Buckhannon, WV 26201

CITY OF BUCKHANNON

The Honorable Kenny Davidson
Mayor of Buckhannon
City Hall
70 East Main Street
Buckhannon, WV 26201

PRIVATE SECTOR

Mr. Sam Nolte
P.O. Box 118
Buckhannon, WV 26201

Dr. Pam Balch, President
WV Wesleyan College
59 College Avenue
Buckhannon, WV 26201

Mr. Willie Parker
Upshur County Administrator
38 West Main Street
Buckhannon, WV 26201

Ms. Connie Tenney
Rt.2, Box 212
Buckhannon, WV 26201

Mr. A.G. Trusler, Jr.
PO Box 688
Buckhannon, WV 26201

Membership Excerpts from Region VII By-Laws

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP, ELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS

SECTION 2.1: COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

- A. Elected Officials - all municipalities and all counties within the region shall be represented on the Council.
1. The county representative shall be the President of the County Commission or a member of the County Commission designated by him or her.
 2. The municipal representative shall be the Mayor or an elected member of the governing body designated by him or her.
 3. The number serving by virtue of this subsection shall comprise not less than fifty-one (51) percent of the total number of members.
 4. The term of office of the members of the Council who serve by virtue of this subsection shall be concurrent with their terms of elected office. If the official's public term of office expires after the Annual Meeting, the vacancy on the Council shall be filled by the next duly elected or appointed official and reviewed at the next scheduled meeting.
- B. Private Sector Members - The principal community and regional interest shall be further represented by the appointment of additional members to the Council.
1. Regional Council Members shall select additional members to serve on the Council to represent principal community or regional interests, including but not limited to: commerce, industry, labor, agriculture, education, health, and any such interests as may be required by federal law or regulations.
 2. The selection of such members shall provide for reasonable representation of geographic, economic and ethnic groups. More specific to this representation is a new regulation from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. The regulation, 13 CFR 300.3, requires a private sector member with respect to any for-profit enterprise, be a senior management official or executive holding a key decision-making position, or that person's designee" and one or more of the following: Executive Directors of Chambers of Commerce or representatives of post-secondary education, workforce development groups or labor groups, all of which must comprise in the aggregate a minimum of thirty-five (35) per cent of our Council.
 3. At least one designee shall be the manager or director of a regional workforce development training program or the director or active board member of the Workforce Investment Board.
 4. **As Region VII has colleges within its member counties, designations should be made from the administration of those institutions to meet the requirements of the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. If there is no college or university, a full-time employed Executive Director of a Chamber of Commerce should be the designee. Counties having both may designate a person from both the college and the Chamber of Commerce.**
 5. With respect to the for-profit entity requirements, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration regulation requires the designee to be a senior management official or executive holding a key decision making position or that person's designee.

6. Region VII Planning and Development Council has fifty-four (54) seats. Thirty-one (31) are member governments and twenty-three (23) are private sectors. Thirty-five (35) % of total membership is nineteen (19) seats that must be designated. Therefore only four (4) private sector seats can now be undesignated.
7. County Commissioners will select private sector members on population basis per county as follows:

<u>COUNTY POPULATION*</u>	<u>PRIVATE SECTOR MEMBERS</u>
1 - 7000	1
7,000 - 12,500	2
12,501 - 17,500	3
17,501 - 20,000	4
OVER - 20,000	5

*Based on the latest U. S. Census estimates or other criteria, as the Council shall determine.

8. Subsequent changes in the designation of representatives shall be made by the Chairperson or his or her designee or as determined by federal regulations.
9. The term of office of members of the Council who serve by virtue of this subsection shall be one (1) year with seating taking place at the Annual Meeting.
10. Private sector members shall not exceed forty-nine percent (49%) of the Council.

Randolph County:

Has 5 private sector seats :

Must appoint 4 designated seats, with one from Davis and Elkins College.

Upshur County:

Has 5 private sector seats:

Must appoint 5 designated seats, with one from WV Wesleyan College.

Braxton County:

Has 3 private sector seats:

Must appoint 2 designated seats.

Barbour County:

Has 3 private sector seats:

Must appoint 2 designated seats, with one from Alderson-Broaddus College.

Lewis County:

Has 3 private sector seats:

Must appoint 2 designated seats.

Gilmer County:

Has 2 private sector seats:

Must appoint 2 designated seats, with one from Glenville State College.

Tucker County:

Has 2 private sector seats:

Must appoint 2 designated seats.

11. Subsequent changes in the designation of representatives shall be determined by the Chairperson or his or her designee.
 12. The term of office of members of the Council who serve by virtue of this subsection shall be one (1) year with seating taking place at the Annual Meeting.
 13. Private sector members must equal shall not exceed forty-nine percent (49%) of the Council.
- C. Active participation in the Region VII Council shall be those members who are required by West Virginia Code to be a member and all private sector members who have been officially appointed to the membership of the Council. All members shall be considered an active member until their term expires or they are properly removed from the membership list by the appointing body. For any member missing three consecutive meetings, the Executive Director shall send a letter to the appointing agency notifying it of the lack of attendance and requesting the appointing agency to appoint another member.
- D. Any member may be subject to removal from Council by majority vote of the Council and the Executive Director shall notify the appointing agency of the desire of the Council to remove its member by letter and ask that the appointing agency remove the member from Council and appoint a succeeding member.

~End of by-law excerpts~

Caveat: Planning Process

EDA criteria for planning grants that are vital to sustain Economic Development Districts (EDD) require certain membership composition on EDD Boards. Region VII serves as the EDD in its respective 7 county service area. EDA has placed new emphasis on board composition so Region VII had to address membership compliance issues. The By-laws Committee worked very hard to ensure a distribution of compliant members to meet minimum requirements. Member appointment requests, representing specific sectors, were made of each County so that all Counties would participate in the restructure of Council Membership.

Region VII Member Composition

BARBOUR COUNTY

NAME	Compliance Category	COUNCIL APPOINTMENT DATE
Tim McDaniel, President Barbour County Comm.	Elected Official	2007
Phil Hart (alternate) Barbour County Comm.	Elected Official	2006
Carlton Haller, Mayor City of Belington	Elected Official	2011
Max Grove (alternate) City of Belington	Elected Official	2011
Ed Larry, Rep City of Philippi	Elected Official	2011
Gary Miller, Mayor Town of Junior	Elected Official	2010
Chuck Foley	County Coordinator	1994
Mike Hudnall Freedom Bank	For Profit Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	2007
Dr. Richard Creehan, President, Alderson- Broaddus College	Post Secondary Education	2011

BRAXTON COUNTY

NAME	Compliance Category	COUNCIL APPOINTMENT DATE
David Jack, President Braxton County Comm.	Elected Official	2010
Paul Bragg, Mayor Town of Burnsville	Elected Official	2007
Richard Roach, Mayor Town of Gassaway	Elected Official	1998
Carolyn S. Marple, Mayor Town of Flatwoods	Elected Official	2005
J.L. Campbell, Mayor Town of Sutton	Elected Official	2008
Dorothy Gioulis	For Profit Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	1994
Evelyn Post Executive Director Central WV Aging Services	Workforce Development Program	2007
Pamela Myers	Real Estate	2007

GILMER COUNTY

NAME	Compliance Category	COUNCIL APPOINTMENT DATE
Darrel Ramsey, Member Gilmer County Comm.	Elected Official	2010
Tashua Allman, Mayor City of Glenville	Elected Official	2009
Franklin Tomblin, Mayor Town of Sand Fork	Elected Official	2009
Ms. Shelly DeMarino Natural Gas Production	For Profit Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	2007
Robert O. Hardman II Glennville State College	Post Secondary Education, representing College President	2004

LEWIS COUNTY

NAME	Compliance Category	COUNCIL APPOINTMENT DATE
Agnes Queen Lewis County Comm. (Representative)	Elected Official	2007
Sam West, Mayor Town of Jane Lew	Elected Official	2009
Tom Fox (alternate) Town of Jane Lew	Elected Official	2008
Julia Spelsburg, Mayor City of Weston	Elected Official	2007
Richard Bonnett	Senior programs, social infrastructure	1974
Greg Cunningham Allegheny Energy	Upper Management	2010
Penny Bullock	Executive, Key Decision Maker	2010

RANDOLPH COUNTY

NAME	AFFILIATION/ECONOMIC INTEREST	COUNCIL APPOINTMENT DATE
Mike Taylor, President Randolph County Comm.	Elected Official	2005
David Harper, Mayor Town of Beverly	Elected Official	2007
Jim Rossi, Mayor Town of Coalton	Elected Official	2009
Rodney McAtee, Mayor Huttonsville Corp.	Elected Official	2008
Bill Brock, Mayor Town of Mill Creek	Elected Official	2007
Duke Talbott, Mayor City of Elkins	Elected Official	2009
Joseph Bennett, Mayor Town of Montrose	Elected Official	2011
Jerry Teter, Mayor Town of Harman	Elected Official	2003
Larry Gross Colonial Mill Works	For Profit Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	2007
Mike Ross Natural Gas Production & Development	For Profit Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	1992
Mr. G.T. "Buck" Smith President Davis & Elkins College	Post Secondary Education	2010
Kate Reed Executive Director Elkins/Randolph Co. Chamber of Commerce	Executive Director, Chamber of Commerce	2011
Mark Doak, President Davis Health Systems	For Profit and Non-profit Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	2007

TUCKER COUNTY

NAME	AFFILIATION/ECONOMIC INTEREST	COUNCIL APPOINTMENT DATE
Thomas Carr Tucker County Comm. President	Elected Official	2011
Joe Drenning, Mayor Town of Davis	Elected Official	2001
Matt Quattro, Mayor City of Thomas	Elected Official	2010
Dorothy Judy, Mayor City of Parsons	Elected Official	2009
Solena Roberts, Mayor Town of Hendricks	Elected Official	2011
Linda Bates, Mayor Town of Hambleton	Elected Official	2005
Sarah Minear Private Business Owner	For Profit Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	1998
Chris Stadelman	For Profit Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	2010

UPSHUR COUNTY

NAME	Compliance Category	COUNCIL APPOINTMENT DATE
Donnie R. Tenney President Upshur County Commission	Elected Official	2000
Kenny Davidson, Mayor City of Buckhannon	Elected Official	2008
Same Nolte	For Profit Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	2011
Dr Pam Balch, President West Virginia Wesleyan	Post Secondary Education	2007
Connie Tenney Progressive Bank	For Profit Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	2004
Willie Parker	For Profit Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	2007
A. G. Trusler, Broker	Executive, Key Decision Maker	2008

REGION VII PDC

<p>Rosemary Wagner Executive Director</p>	<p align="center">Region VII Planning and Development Council, Workforce Investment Board. Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.</p>	<p>Served Council since 1995</p>
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Rosemary Wagner serves as Ex Officio Secretary of Council by virtue of position. She also serves as ex officio board member on 2 local Development Authorities and 1 Chamber of Commerce Board by virtue of position. She also is an active partner and participant on each Chamber/ Development Authority.

Wagner also serves as a voting member on the Regional Workforce Development Board.

Elected Officials	Private Sector: Senior Management or Executive/key decision maker.	Executive Director; Chamber of Commerce	Post Secondary Education	Workforce Development	At Large	Total
31	15	1	4	1	2	54

Elected Officials	57 %
Compliant Private Sector*	39 %
At Large	4 %
Total	100 %

*EDA requires 35%

REGIONAL VII PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OFFICERS

Chairman.....The Honorable Donnie R. Tenney, Upshur County Commission
Vice Chairman.....The Honorable Agnes Queen, Lewis County Commission
Treasurer.....Mike Hudnall, Barbour County Private Sector
Secretary/Ex-Officio.....Rosemary Wagner, Executive Director

REGION VII PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL STAFF

Executive Director.....Rosemary Wagner
Regional Development Director.....Shane Whitehair
Community Development Specialist.....Bob Jacobus
Administrative Assistant.....Kelly Clovis
Project Manager.....Cary Smith, P.E.
Consulting Staff
 Accounting Consultant.....Cam Matheny, C.P.A.
 Information & Technology.....Citynet, LLC
 Legal Counsel.....David Sims, Attorney of Law

B. IN THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

SITUATION ASSESSMENT—THE AREA AND ITS ECONOMY

Area Development and Trends

General Description of Area

Geographic Location. Region VII Planning and Development Council (Region) serves seven counties located in an east to west band, generally two counties wide, from the geographic center of West Virginia to the western edge of the Eastern Panhandle. The entire Region is in the jurisdiction of the federal Appalachian Regional Commission.

Land Area of Counties

<u>County</u>	<u>Square Miles</u>
Barbour	341
Braxton	514
Gilmer	340
Lewis	389
Randolph	1040
Tucker	419
Upshur	355
Region Total	3398

Proximity to Markets. Region VII is centrally located to the major markets of Washington D.C./Baltimore MD, Pittsburgh PA, Columbus OH, Lexington/Louisville KY, and Bristol/Kingsport TN. Interstate 79 (I-79) connects Pittsburgh to Lewis and Braxton Counties and the southern markets. Rt. 19 connects to I-79 south of Sutton in Braxton County and provides excellent access to the Bristol Tennessee markets. Some access is afforded Gilmer County; however, the proposed Little Kanawha Parkway would open Gilmer and the western segment of Region VII to the Ohio Valley market. Completed portions of Corridor H (Route 33) connect Upshur, Barbour and Randolph Counties to I-79 and the Pittsburgh and southern markets. Corridor H is under construction in the east and when it is finished Tucker County will have access to both the markets serviced by I-79 and I-81 in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. With the completion of Corridor H the entire region will be connected to the eastern markets dominated by Washington, D.C. and Baltimore. Furthermore, Corridor H and I-79 has the potential to become the route of choice from West Virginia to the inland port at Front Royal, Virginia. At Front Royal, containers can be loaded on trains which go directly to the Norfolk, Virginia Deep Sea Port. Corridor H will be Region VII's open door to the world economy.

Natural Features. This area has three distinct geological provinces. The Ridge and Valley region is located in Randolph County and Tucker County. Long mountains extending from the southwest to the northeast with wide valleys characterize this geologic province. Tucker County is also home to Canaan Valley, the highest valley in elevation of its large size in the eastern United States. Barbour and Upshur Counties are transition areas from the Ridge and Valley to the Allegheny Plateau. The geologic province between the ridge and valley and plateau is often called the Allegheny Front. The watershed drains of the Front are more like gorges in contrast to the wide based valleys to the east. Barbour and Upshur Counties have mountains that gradate to rolling hills in the west. In between is somewhat rugged terrain. Gilmer, Lewis and Braxton Counties enjoy the rolling hill features of the Allegheny Plateau; however, there are islands of rugged terrain in each of the western counties.

The headwaters of at least 12 eastern rivers are located in Region VII and the Army Corps of Engineers maintain three large flood management lakes in Braxton and Lewis Counties. There is a large energy industry impoundment in Upshur County. The majority of the land base is in forest; however, significant acreage is used for pasture and hay purposes. Much of Barbour, Randolph, and Tucker Counties are part of the Monongahela National Forest.

This region is rich in minerals and natural resources. Besides water and forests, much of the area has coal reserves. A major natural gas console is located in Central West Virginia and gas production is prominent in much of the Region’s counties. A number of limestone deposits are also quarried. A natural gas formation, called the Marcellus Shale, has caused a “boom town” atmosphere in the region.

Development Patterns. For the most part, new development is occurring in corridors along four-lane highways in Region VII. I-79 intersections are showing exceptional growth. Much economic expansion can be attributed to the exploitation of the Marcellus Shale. Many gas well service companies have located in the region and support businesses such as truck & equipment dealerships are emerging. All towns and cities adjacent to the good highways are prospering. Barbour and Gilmer Counties, which are lacking four-lane highways, have some development at great effort of community leaders. Tucker County has had some recent development on Rt. 92 near Davis. New residential/2nd home construction and development is occurring and is projected to boom once Corridor H is complete, probably due to the Urban to Rural Mass Evacuation issue in the National Capitol Region. Corridor H construction through Tucker County should boost the development and revitalization of the City of Parsons, the City of Thomas, and the Town of Davis at some point in the future. The WV Senator Manchin and Alabama Senator Selby are proposing a bill that would allow unused allotments in the ARC Highway’s program in other states to be used on projects that are ready to go. The allotments would be reimbursed in future state allotments. If this passes Corridor H would be fully funded and ready for final construction. Residential development continues to exhibit low activity over the last year. Prefabricated and modular homes are quite popular; however, there are clusters of luxury homes throughout the region. Commercial development along the finished portions of Corridor H has seen moderate activity over the past year.

Population and Labor Force

The following chart summarizes population and labor force by county.

County	2010 Census	2000 Census	2009 Labor Force (July)	2010 Labor Force (July)	2011 Labor Force (July)
Barbour	16,589	15,557	6,590	6,640	6,260
Braxton	14,523	14,702	5,820	5,780	5,630
Gilmer	8,693	7,160	3,020	3,050	3,210
Lewis	16,372	16,919	7,470	7,520	7,980
Randolph	29,405	28,262	12,470	12,350	11,440
Tucker	7,141	7,321	2,990	2,780	2,620
Upshur	24,254	23,404	10,380	10,330	10,080
Totals	116,977	113,325	48,740	48,450	47,220

The chart indicates that the Region has decreased in workforce population by 1520 persons (3.1%) from July 2009 to July 2011.

Region VII is rural in nature. The City of Elkins (population 7,094) is the largest municipality.

Economy

There has been some upward movement in the Region's economy until the recent recession. An abundant hardwood forest began to reach economic maturity in the mid-1990s and the value added wood industry has expanded. However, many jobs have been lost due to the economic downturn the nation has faced for the last 5 years. Adequate volumes of raw timber reserves should last the first quarter of this century. The energy sector is developing with wind-electric farms becoming established in the ridge and valley province. Energy has always been a predominant attribute to the area's economy; however, new technology requires fewer jobs to produce market volumes of energy. In the past, 75% of non-farm workers were service providers, with Government is the largest employment sector in this Region. However the advent of natural gas production from the Marcellus Shale is fueling much economic growth and changing the landscape of employment. In counties with natural gas activities 71% are service workers. It is anticipated the industry cluster emerging from this activity will significantly impact the region's economy for the next 60 years.



Other Players. Plastic and specialty component manufacturing were very popular in the Region; however, there has been no significant expansion in those areas in the last several years. A cluster of correctional facilities includes two regional jails, a federal prison, a state prison, a state youth treatment center, and two private teen behavior programs. There are several other state and federal correction facilities dispersed in adjacent counties. Retail development is escalating at major intersections along I-79 and Corridor H. Completion of Corridor H to I-81 will have significant effects on the Region's economy. The Army National Guard is constructing a new 50,000sf building along Corridor H in Randolph County and a new USPF facility in Upshur County near Buckhannon.

Infrastructure and Services. Due to the rural nature of the Region, infrastructure development has not progressed as in urban America. Local governments and communities continue to address the infrastructure needs in the water/sewer arena. Most incorporated towns and cities have water/sewer; however, some municipalities have system components that are antiquated and need replaced. Some smaller, un-chartered communities such as Whitmer in Randolph County and Rock Cave in Upshur County desperately need services.

The Region is progressive in communications infrastructure. Broadband projects for rural residents have been implemented in Barbour County. That technology is available to most county seats and towns along the four-lane corridors. Fiber optics has been installed in the Verizon service area, a major hub located at Rock Cave in Upshur County. Frontier and Alltel provide top end copper technology to their customers. Broadband satellite services are readily available for the more rural consumer. Glenville has an established wireless system. Micrologic in Buckhannon has a wireless "backbone" infrastructure plan in development.

Each County has an industrial park except for Braxton, which has one in the planning stages. High quality shell, specification and multi-tenant/use buildings are on most sites. There are facilities available to firms looking to locate in this region. Tucker County is now complete with its industrial park and is currently being marketed to potential businesses.

Since completing its new multi-tenant, high tech center at the I-79 Flatwoods intersection, the Braxton County Development Authority has seen many new jobs locate to the this facility. The need for a new building has been demonstrated and is being planned for adjacent to the existing facility to meet business demand. Barbour County has a very good building ready for occupancy and a new aviation industrial incubator is being built at the Philippi/Barbour County Regional Airport with US EDA funding. US EDA invested \$1.75 million in the Upshur County Industrial Park at the 50% level to develop industrial sites, install an access road and install infrastructure which was recently completed. The Lewis County Industrial Park at Jane Lew is now full, private investment funded almost all of the new construction.

New industrial sites that are in the preliminary development stage would include Franklin Hills in Gilmer County and Bridge Run in Upshur County. Mud Lick Road in Upshur County is blooming into a staging area for the natural gas industry complete with production firms and tool and equipment vendors.

Natural and Cultural Resources and Environmental Issues

Due to the rugged topography most sites suitable for development are located in floodplains. This precipitates into expensive site development for any industry. Archaeology is an important concern throughout the Region due to an abundance of Native American culture and Civil War sites. Architecture issues would include local governments trying to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/Section 504 requirements in buildings that are 150 years old. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is particular about how one installs an elevator in a cultural treasure. The Monongahela National Forest has finalizing a long term Forest Management Plan Revision that will impact this region for the next 40 years (last plan approved 1970s). This plan is more restrictive and reduces total acres available for commercial wood and fiber production. In FY2010, US EDA funded a Economic Adjustment Disaster Planning Grant to help mitigate for natural disasters in the region.

Weston Hospital. Lewis County is home to the largest hand cut stone building from the Civil War era. This facility once housed the West Virginia Mental Hospital. The hospital campus was auctioned for \$1.5 million on August 29, 2007. Tours of the facility continue to be an attraction for Lewis County and Weston.

Clean Water Act. Environmental issues continue to play a large part of the Region's economic dynamic. Some County development is stifled by the regulations of the Clean Water Act. Tucker County, located in the Allegheny Highlands, contains many perched valleys in which natural bogs and beaver ponds are abundant. These ecotypes produce weak acid water with a high biologic component. This creates a condition in which there are high oxygen demands on water that does not have high oxygen capacity by nature. In many cases the naturally occurring oxygen demands are not in compliance with the Federal Statute. The water problem is further complicated by acid rain caused by Midwest industrial centers. Moisture laden air tends to condensate at higher elevations thus the warm air masses from the Great Lakes and Ohio Valley lose their capacity to hold water over Tucker County. This national clean water mandate is an onerous burden to certain communities of Region VII who would like to prosper, but cannot get past regulations. The Tier 2.5 stream classification process (Clean Water Act) is alarming to many of the Region's citizenry.

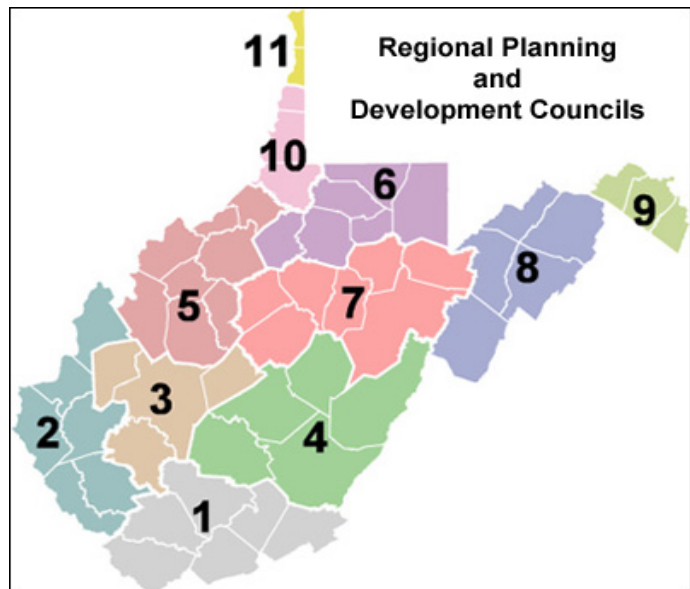
DEP. The State Department of Environmental Protection faces several issues including the Tier 2.5, coal extraction beneath streams, residential waste problems and public perception of Marcellus impacts.

National Forest. The Monongahela National Forest has completed a Forest Plan Revision. It is notable that the Forest Plan process for all national forests had its origins on the Monongahela. The original intent of the local citizens who raised forest management issues was to have commercial production and harvest without the gross exploitation of resources as practiced in that day. Today, local people still want the forest environment protected with wise use and harvest of the resource. The Forest Service has accomplished significant reduction of the number of forest acres (158,000) available for commercial harvest though stipulations in the chosen management alternative. This is a significant loss to the economy in Region VII since 3 of the 7 counties have National Forest lands in their boundaries and raw timber production is such a large part of the regional gross product.

Planning and Economic Development Activities

Region VII Planning and Development Council serves seven counties as a technical assistance provider. Also, Region VII is an Economic Development District (EDD) for the US Department of Commerce (DOC) Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the Local Development District (LDD) for the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). Each county in Region VII has an operational Economic Development Authority or Association for planning and project development purposes.

Consistently, several Small Cities Block Grant (SCBG) applications and U.S. Economic Development Administration (USEDA) grant applications are submitted on an annual basis. Qualified projects are developed and applications are submitted to ARC and USDA on a need/demand basis. Governor’s Community Participation Grants, Transportation Enhancement Grants, Community Law Enforcement Block Grants, and Culture and History Preservation Grants are developed and submitted on an ongoing basis. Region VII Planning and Development Council staff provides technical assistance in project development and environmental clearance as requested and required by member governments and funding agencies.



Finish Corridor H has been rated the #1 strategy & opportunity in the CEDS evaluation surveys for 8 years. An interesting trend emerged in the FY10 evaluation instrument. The desire and demand to finish Corridor H has gotten stronger to the point that the normal bell curve of responses has been destroyed. The statistical curve looks more like a spike than a bell. This statistical anomaly occurred again in the FY11 survey. FY12 surveys were suspended and replaced by outreach meetings at the county level. The Corridor H issue was predominating in counties where the new road will exist. After the county meetings, Region VII facilitated a Regional Economic Summit funded by an ARC

Flex-E-Grant. At this meeting a Corridor H presentation was presented and a leader of one non-Corridor H counties realized just how much the new highway would benefit his community because of the inland port connection. Responses charted water infrastructure development and local Airport development tied at #2. Wireless/Broadband development and workforce development tied as the #3 opportunity. Unfinished Corridor H is the #1 constraint to any and all development activities in this rural area.

Strategic Evaluation

A content analysis was conducted on the minutes of the county level meetings. This evaluation identified opportunities, constraints and other pertinent issues in the region.

Identification of Principal Opportunities and Constraints to Economic Development and Improved Quality of Life.

One major opportunity was identified again in the Region VII Planning and Development service area by this method...**Corridor H!** Last year's major opportunity was **Develop Corridor H!** This Highway is the most supported issue in the CEDS process for eight years in a row. Water infrastructure and local airport emerged as tied for the #2 opportunity.

An unfinished Corridor H is the major constraint and transportation (closely tied to Corridor H) was considered the second limiting constraint. Essentially Corridor H is the major issue. The third constraint was workforce development. Affordable housing, lack of funding, lack of infrastructure and local attitudes followed and were rated as equal constraints.

Principal Opportunities. In FY10 it was reported Corridor H will be complete by 2038; unless the project receives funding over the next five years or so. This picture is changing rapidly as the Governor of West Virginia in 2010 announced letting construction bids on approximately half of the unfinished Corridor H sections. Additionally this Governor announced the procurement of design for the remainder of the highway project. That Governor became U.S. Senator and has partnered with the Senior WV Senator and other ARC States to allow unspent state allocations of the Appalachian Highway system be used in states where the projects are ready to go. This money would be repaid from future state allocations. **West Virginia is ready to go with Corridor H.** When the highway is completed, it will provide unprecedented economic opportunities for Tucker, Randolph, Barbour, Upshur, and Lewis Counties. Braxton and Gilmer Counties will benefit also, because the Corridor will provide the best route to the inland port of Front Royal. There will be a window of opportunity for commerce and enterprise -- the Region is trying to prepare for that windfall event. Tucker County's new industrial park near the Town of Davis will be adjacent to the new highway. The Belington Industrial Park in Barbour County is available for expansion. Upshur County Development Authority just completed site development on Corridor H with an EDA investment. The City of Parsons has an excellent Commerce Center project developed and Thomas is working towards revitalization. A regional jail has been constructed in Randolph County that will serve the corridor counties. In Upshur County, the Buckhannon/Upshur County Regional Airport (on Corridor H) has experienced vendor growth as a result of expanding its runway to accommodate small/medium jets. This airport is in demand as a business hub/center of operations for local air service and maintenance providers. They still hold a favorable position to incubate a centralized air courier/freight distribution cluster at a very centralized/competitive location. The HealthNet air ambulance operation is located at the Upshur site. The regional Corrections cluster is an outstanding opportunity for local citizens to obtain higher skill/higher wage jobs.

The I-79 Corridor still offers economic growth activities and promotion of the Little Kanawha Parkway (Corridor L) would situate Braxton, Gilmer, and Lewis Counties for exponential economic growth in the future. Regional gas production from Marcellus Shale is an opportunity to capitalize on and that industry cluster has filled areas available for expansion at the Lewis County Industrial Park at Jane Lew.

Constraints. One major opportunity is still identified in the Region VII Planning and Development service area is, **Finish Corridor H!** No other opportunity or activity dominates categories in the overall regional evaluation. The Corridor and transportation tied to the road were the major constraint. Workforce development was the second most mentioned constraint while other identified constraints were rated lower.

Identification of Growth Centers

In the previous CEDS the evaluation tool identified growth corridors instead of growth centers. Corridor H, and the towns and cities along that route were the most listed in the Great Growth and Great Potential categories of the survey instrument. Corridor H (RT. 33) connects with I-79 and divides the region into three parts providing some access to all counties in the region. Corridor H again was the most identified growth corridor. The past eight CEDS, including the county level meetings this year, have identified the Corridors and the towns along these routes as the major growth centers.

Energy is fast becoming the major industry cluster in Region VII, displacing timber. It should be noted that heavy forest harvest for the last 17 years and a down national housing construction sector has contributed to timbers decline.

Education is a very important regional cluster. Region VII has 3 very good private colleges and a state college spread across the seven counties. Fairmont State University has major extension education programs in Braxton and Lewis Counties.

Evaluation of how the Region's Projects, Programs, and Initiative Impact and Support Existing or Currently Targeted Industry Clusters in the Region

All of the Economic Development Authorities/Associations in the Region have done a reasonable job in providing industrial sites for economic development. These sites support the value-added wood cluster, energy related companies, plastics and the emerging specialty components sectors. Workforce development for the wood related industries is very well serviced by the Wood Technology Center located in Elkins, Randolph County.

The Region VII Planning and Development Council continue to provide technical and facilitative support to the seven counties and the 24 municipalities in its service area. A Hardwood Alliance Zone (HAZ) has been organized by local development authorities in North-Central West Virginia. Barbour, Lewis, Randolph, Tucker, and Upshur Counties belong to this group whose purpose is to promote the wood industry cluster located in the region.

The economic development leaders in the Region's Counties along Corridor H have banded together in 2011 to form the Robert C. Byrd Corridor H Highway Authority to promote the completion of this important road. They are currently implementing a public relations/outreach project to spur on the momentum of Corridor H completion.

Wood Products Cluster. An initiative that has had positive impact in Region VII was the development of industrial parks. A goal was set to have a park devoted to industry established with at least one building and infrastructure in each county of Region VII. Braxton County does not have an industrial park, but the County does have a new 30,000 square foot multi tenant technology facility that is at full capacity value-added wood facilities are located in the industrial parks of Barbour, Gilmer, Randolph and Upshur Counties. Weyerhaeuser has an engineered structure wood plant in the Upshur Industrial Park and a major installation in Braxton County. Tucker County officials have recruited a value-added wood industry to its new industrial park. There are major and medium size log yards, but timber extraction has been slow the past 2 years due to the down turn in the national economy. Also timber stands are a bit harder to acquire since there has been heavy extraction for 15 years. The industrial site initiative has been a resounding success in wood industry recruitment and retention in Region VII.

Energy Cluster. A major oil and gas cluster has emerged as companies have moved into this seven county region. Lewis County and Upshur County appear to be the most prominent counties with these energy related firms. Upshur County has benefited from the creation of over 200 jobs at Weatherford well servicing headquarters. Chesapeake Energy is located in Lewis County at the Jane Lew Industrial Park along I-79. Chesapeake Energy is the number one producer of U.S. natural gas. Other numerous oil and gas companies are also located at this park. Chesapeake has commissioned and completed a major seismic survey of a 40 square mile area in Upshur County using helicopters to drop drills into forested terrain. They anticipate drilling 350 wells in the area and are looking for the best locations from this survey. This is a substantial investment by the natural gas producer.

Plastics Cluster. A fledgling plastics industry cluster has been encouraged by the availability of building sites in the industrial parks established in Region VII. A manufacturer of plastic tanks is located in the Philippi Industrial Park. A fiberglass pool firm, Viking Pools, is located in the Lewis County Industrial Park at Jane Lew. Natural gas utilities installed on the available industrial sites would greatly encourage growth.

Corrections Cluster. Region VII is central to a cluster of civil corrections facilities that contributes a positive impact the local economy. Many correctional installations are within the commuting community of Region VII.



Successes, Changes, Directions

2011 Flex-E-Grant – “Facing the Future Together”

A regional economic & community development meeting focusing on The Region VII PDC service area of Barbour, Braxton, Gilmer, Lewis, Randolph, Tucker, and Upshur Counties was designed, organized and implemented. Speakers were engaged to address the most pressing issues in the region: 1) Corridor H, 2) Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Production and 3) Workforce Development. The meeting featured two very distinguished speakers, Congressman McKinley (WV01) providing the lunch keynote and John M Cartwright, ARC Director of Regional Planning and Research.

Project Outcomes:

The pre-test/post-test evaluation tool showed following trends regarding a more positive outlook to the following issues.

- Better understanding of important issues facing the community
- Membership of organization understand what the organization hopes to become or achieve
- The organization’s vision is translated into a clear, challenging yet achievable, set of goals
- The organization has a clearly defined plan for achieving its goals that drives the day-to-day activities of the organization The organization participates regularly in organizational planning activities and data collection which is used to support and improve planning efforts
- The community has strong citizen participation in community projects and activities. The community strives to expand the number of resources used to implement projects.
- The community has witnessed an increase in the number of “non-traditional leaders” running and/or elected to office

• 58% of the attendees were 50-70 years old	• 68% are employed self or full time
• 68% of attendees were male	• 2% are retired
• 100% were Caucasian	• 36% are elected officials
• 66% had relatives living in their community	• 84% are married
• 63% have run for office	• 89% voted in last election
• 47% have lived in West Virginia between 20 & 40 years	• 32% are college graduates • 32% have done graduate work

The project had a significant impact by providing information on the issues that are important to our region. The completion of Corridor H has been the number one issue in the Region’s CEDS for the past 10 years. It will mean great economic growth to the entire region. Information was provided that the new highway will give central West Virginia direct access to the inland port at Front Royal Virginia, thus a direct route to overseas markets. An unexpected outcome was a leader from a county that did not have Corridor H physical ties understood that was still going to be the best way to get that counties goods and products to the national and global market. This leader changed from being a mild adversary to an enthusiastic supporter of the highway project. The Congressman publicly stated that the “Road” must be finished.

The Marcellus Gas production presentation provided an overview of drilling techniques and addressed ground water protection and landowner security issues. The development of natural gas production in Marcellus Shale will create untold jobs for the next 30 years, not only in extraction but also in value-added natural gas products and the manufacture of goods (especially plastics).

“This is exactly the kind of information and education on the issues we need.”

Mary Jo Thompson, Director of Community Development-West Virginia Development Office